

Press Release



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NEW CHICKPEA PROCESSING FACILITY IN ADAMA

New technology allows processor and exporter to reach high value markets with Ethiopian chickpea and oilseeds

Adama, Oromia Region, Ethiopia, August 25, 2015 – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Agro Prom International today officially inaugurated a new industrial chickpea processing and cleaning facility in the Oromia Region. Due to gaps in quality, Ethiopia chickpea exports usually end up in lesser value markets. Because the machinery in the new facility cleans chickpeas to above 99 percent purity and has the capacity to clean five metric tons per hour, Agro Prom is poised to sell to the more demanding and higher value American, European and Middle Eastern markets.

“More and more people around the world are turning to chickpeas for a healthy and delicious source of fiber and protein,” according to USAID Mission Director Dennis Weller. “We firmly believe that facilities like this will provide more access to markets and help to put more money into the pockets of Ethiopian farmers.”

The processing machinery is the result of an innovation grants program designed by USAID and focused on improving the competitiveness and potential of Ethiopia’s chickpea sector. The equipment, which can also process sesame, is worth over \$765,000 USD, of which USAID funded more than \$168,000 USD, and Agro Prom invested the rest.

“As the first chickpea producer in Africa, Ethiopia should be a major player in the export market. With higher returns, farmers will be less likely to turn to other less-valuable crops like cereals. Agro Prom will lead the chickpea export charge and court new buyers around the world,” said Agro Prom founder and CEO, Elias Geneti.

USAID’s Agribusiness Market Development activity uses an integrated approach to improve productivity and competitiveness. In chickpea and sesame, USAID partners with the ministries of agriculture and trade, farmer cooperative unions and the private sector to introduce improved quality seeds, better harvesting and post-harvest handling techniques in addition to processing and cleaning technology. USAID has also assisted chickpea and sesame exporters gain access to finance and international buyers through conferences and international trade shows.

USAID’s Agribusiness Market Development activity is the Feed the Future initiative’s flagship program in Ethiopia and represents one of USAID’s largest contributions to the Government of Ethiopia’s Agricultural Growth Program. The \$3.5 billion global hunger and food security initiative sustains the U.S. Government’s commitment as one of Ethiopia’s largest partners in developing the agriculture sector, which is a fundamental cornerstone of the Ethiopian economy.

Agro Prom International, founded in 2005, is an Ethiopian food processor and exporter specializing in oilseed and pulses as well as a certified cereal seed supplier. Based in Addis Ababa, the company has a processing facility in Adama, Oromia. In addition to seed and pulses, the company exports spices. Sesame currently represents the majority of the company’s exports, and chickpea is expected to surpass sesame by 2016.

For more information, see <https://www.usaid.gov/ethiopia>